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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: DPP PARTY REFORM CONFERENCE

¶1. Summary: Taiwan dailies March 31 focused on KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou's meeting with President Chen Shui-bian slated for April 3, and junior DPP legislators' plan to hold a conference to discuss party reforms.

¶2. The editorials March 31 all commented on DPP legislators' call for a party reform conference. The editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's largest daily, suggested that the DPP government carry out reforms and pay attention to mainstream public opinion. The pro-independence "Taiwan Daily" ran an editorial calling upon the DPP government to conduct reforms, and upon the Taiwan people to protect the grass-roots regime. The centrist, pro status quo "China Times" editorialized that President Chen Shui-bian's attitude toward the party's reform conference could easily determine the forum's outcome. The editorial in the pro-unification "United Daily News" urged the DPP to draw a demarcation line between President Chen Shui-bian and the party. The pro-independence "Taiwan News" editorialized that the DPP leadership could help revive the party. End summary.

A) "To Remain a Grass-Roots Ruling Party, the DPP Should Carry out Reforms and Pay Attention to Mainstream Public Opinion"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 600,000] said in an editorial (3/31):

"... It is such a myth that 'Ma Ying-jeou is impeccable.' If the DPP wants to defeat Ma in the 2008 presidential election and remain as the ruling party, high-ranking DPP officials must learn the lessons [of the previous elections and recent polls] and have the resolve for party reforms. They must also present a performance that is in accordance with mainstream public opinion."

B) "The DPP Must Reflect on Itself and Carry out Reforms; Taiwan People Should Attend a Nation-Wide Movement to Protect the Grass-Roots Regime"

The pro-independence "Taiwan Daily" [circulation: 100,000] editorialized (3/31):

"... In terms of protecting the grass-roots regime, the ruling DPP should shoulder the greatest responsibility, and actually carry out reforms. The party should also earn back people's trust and support by non-corrupt behavior and substantive performances. None of the Taiwan people should be bystanders; they should support the government through public opinion and protect the regime by ballots."

C) "The Ruler's Mentality is Critical for the Success of the DPP Party Reform Conference"

The pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (3/31):

"... Currently, the DPP faces not only a 'crisis' created by lower and lower approval ratings, but also a 'difficult situation' confronts the ruling elites and DPP supporters. ..."

"However, the fact that junior legislators dare to collectively speak out against high-ranking DPP officials shows that the party still has vitality in terms of democracy. ..."

"... If high-ranking DPP officials, such as President Chen Shui-bian, would be willing to hand over power, share their power with others, and listen to peoples' voices, that would be the key to enable the DPP to walk away from the [party's] low-popularity."

D) "Abandon A-bian and Protect the Party: the DPP Must Appoint Another Character to Speak for the Party."

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] said in its editorial (3/31):

"... No matter through a party reform conference or an interim party assembly, the DPP must democratically re-construct its policy statements and ethics. The DPP must also appoint other political figures to promote its policy as well as ethics in order to reveal to the public that Chen Shui-bian is Chen Shui-bian, and the DPP is the DPP. ..."

E) "DPP Can Revise Only by Leadership"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] opined in an editorial (3/31):

"... In the wake of these events, the process of party affairs and organization re-examination and reform promised by DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun in his January campaign for the party chairmanship post can no longer be delayed. ..."

"We strongly urge that party leaders and factions do not fall into the temptation of using this process to 'settle accounts' or to make displays of political purity or treating it as a platform for jockeying for position in the run-up to the year-end Taipei and Kaohsiung mayoral polls or the upcoming legislative or presidential elections. ..."

YOUNG